

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2010



Building a Better Community with You

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ANNUAL REVIEWS OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE

Each summer College Station's Comprehensive Plan and Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) are reviewed by the Planning and Zoning Commission and the City Council in an effort to keep these important documents current and relevant. The reviews are mandated by ordinance, and they afford our policy-making officials the opportunity to evaluate the progress of the plan, how it is being implemented through the development ordinance, and any changes that may be necessary to help reach the adopted vision for College Station. After an extensive planning process that involved broad public participation, a major update to the Comprehensive Plan was adopted in May 2009. This will be the first review of the new Comprehensive Plan and the progress of its implementation.

The 2010 annual reviews are tentatively scheduled for the June 3rd Planning and Zoning Commission meeting and the June 24th City Council meeting. Anyone who would like to provide comments on the Comprehensive Plan or the UDO is encouraged to contact Molly Hitchcock, Planning Administrator, at 979.764.3570 or via email at mhitchcock@cstx.gov.



CITY OF COLLEGE STATION
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TRACKING THE NUMBERS

Single-Family Homes:

(Does not include slab onlys)

YTD - 1 yr	YTD - 2 yr
↑ 6%	↓ 3%

Year-to-date, single-family home permits increased in quantity when compared to last year at this time, March 2009, and decreased when compared with two years ago, March 2008.

Commercial:

(Does not include slab onlys)

YTD - 1 yr	YTD - 2 yr
↓ 20%	↓ 77%

Year-to-date, commercial permits experienced a decrease in quantity when compared to last year at this time, March 2009, and a decrease compared with two years ago, March 2008.

Total Permits:

YTD - 1 yr	YTD - 2 yr
↑ 14%	↓ 29%

Year-to-date, total permits experienced an increase in quantity when compared to last year at this time, March 2009, and experienced a decrease when compared with two years ago, March 2008.

NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES HAPPENINGS

The Neighborhood Services Office hosts monthly Seminar Suppers for neighborhood leaders to attend and gather information, as well as training on important topics. On May 17, 2010, the Seminar will feature the CSPD Community Services and Crime Prevention Units training neighborhood leaders on ways to keep their neighborhoods safe, prevent crime, and work in conjunction with the Police Department. If your neighborhood is interested in participating, or would like to form a Neighborhood Association or Block Watch, please contact Barbara Moore, Neighborhood Services Coordinator by email at bmoore@cstx.gov or at 979-764-6262.

Also, the Strong & Sustainable Grant (formerly Gateway Grants) Pre-Application meeting will be held on June 1, 2010, at 11:00 am at the College Station Conference Center in room 101. If your neighborhood plans to apply for this grant, a representative must attend this pre-application meeting to receive the application and grant guidelines. The application deadline is **August 2, 2010**. Only neighborhoods that are registered partners with the Neighborhood Partnership Program (NPP) are eligible to apply. If your neighborhood is interested in becoming a part of the NPP, please contact the Neighborhood Services Coordinator. For more information on the Neighborhood Partnership Program, please visit the city's website at www.cstx.gov.



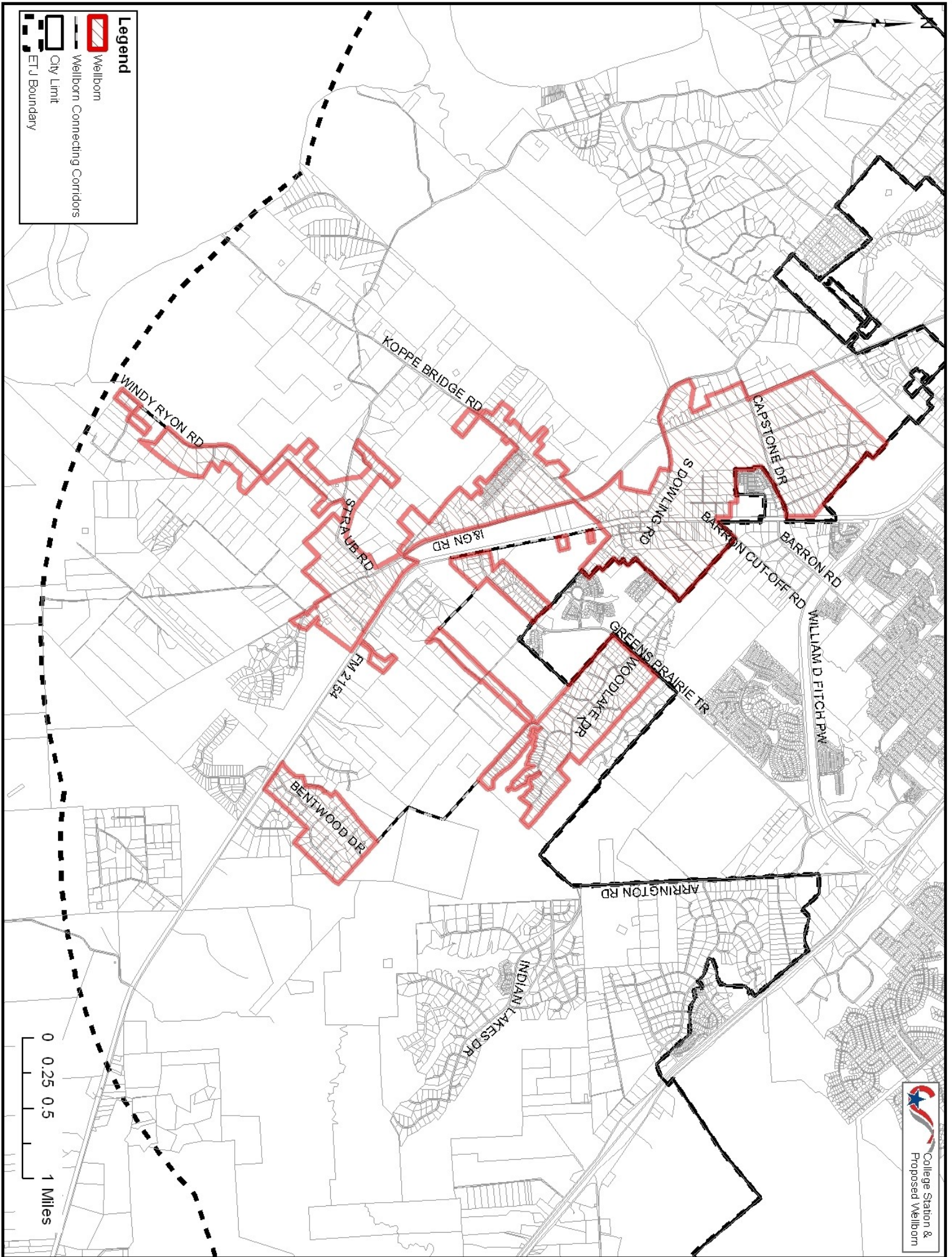
WELLBORN INCORPORATION

Recently a great deal of discussion has occurred regarding the request by a group of Brazos County residents for the City Council to grant consent for them to incorporate an area located adjacent to the current City limits in the City's extraterritorial jurisdiction. Rather than grant its consent for incorporation, the Council has identified a number of alternatives to incorporation that would achieve the stated objectives while protecting the City's long-term interests, such as working in partnership with the area residents to develop a small area plan and unique regulations.

A number of reasons exist why incorporation of the Wellborn area could be problematic and costly for the residents of College Station. For these and other reasons the State law has, for nearly 50 years, granted existing cities the authority to deny requests for incorporation and to annex such areas to provide the needed municipal services.

Additional facts and further information can be found at the City's website at <http://www.cstx.gov/index.aspx?page=3538> and by viewing videos of recent Council meetings at <http://www.cstx.gov/index.aspx?page=3119> . These pages are regularly updated and residents are encouraged to visit them for the latest facts and information.





Legend

- Wellborn
- Wellborn Connecting Corridors
- City Limit
- ETJ Boundary



PLANNER ON CALL FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTION

The Planner on Call system helps over 1,800 people a year that call, email, or come into the P&DS office with questions related to planning and development. This section highlights some of the more common questions. If you have questions for the Planner on Call, please contact us at 979-764-3570 or POC@cstx.gov.

Q: I would like to use a sign to advertise the future development for my site. Do I need a permit for this type of signage, and what regulations apply?

A: Yes, Development Signs require Sign Permits. One Development Sign is permitted per premise with a maximum height of 15 feet and a 10 foot minimum setback from the right-of-way. The maximum signage area is determined by the classification of the adjacent right-of-way as shown below:

Street Classification (As designated on the Thoroughfare Plan)	Max Area (square footage)
Residential / Collector Street	35
Arterial Street	65
Freeway	200

A Development Sign permitted for an active building project may be utilized until 75% of a project is leased or a permanent sign is installed. The sign must also be removed if, after 12 months, no Building Permit has been issued. Development Signs permitted for active subdivision projects must be removed if, after 12 months, no Preliminary or Final Plat has been approved. Once a plat has been approved, the Sign Permit is valid as long as a Preliminary Plat is in effect, or in the absence of a valid Preliminary Plat, for 24 months from the date of approval of a Final Plat.

More information about development signage regulations can be found in Section 7.4.K of the Unified Development Ordinance. Sign Permit applications can be obtained at our office or accessed on the internet at www.cstx.gov/applications.



IMPROVEMENTS MADE TO CITY'S CIP BUDGET PROCESS

Several steps were recently added to the Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) budget process to ensure that the City's capital projects are furthering the stated goals and strategies of the Comprehensive Plan and accompanying master plans. While Capital projects are usually associated with infrastructure (such as streets, water lines, sewer lines, and multi-use paths), they also include new buildings (such as a library or city hall). Aligning the CIP budget with the Comprehensive Plan is critical because the Comprehensive Plan represents the community's vision for the future. In other words, the CIP budget is an important tool used to link the planning and implementation of projects.

The CIP budget development timeline was also expanded to provide the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board and the Planning & Zoning Commission with an opportunity to provide feedback on proposed capital projects. Chuck Gilman, Director of Capital Projects, presented the proposed CIP budget to both groups earlier this year and received meaningful feedback from both bodies.

Lastly, developing the capital cost and identifying all of the ongoing operation and maintenance (O&M) expenses earlier in the budget process is new to the CIP budget process. Given the current challenges associated with the City's revenues, the O&M costs play a big role in terms of the timing of CIP projects.

These changes were designed with the goal of enhancing the City's ability to deliver capital projects that implement the citizen's vision for College Station. For more information on the CIP budget process, please contact Chuck Gilman at cgilman@cstx.gov.



Central College Station Neighborhood Plan

The Central College Station Neighborhood Plan is near completion. Planning and Development Services Staff recently held a community Open House to present draft goals and strategies to the neighborhoods and get feedback on the direction of the plan. This plan focuses on four areas: Community Character, Neighborhood Integrity, Mobility, and Sustainability. A summary of these chapters follows, but more information about the chapters is available online at www.cstx.gov/centralplan.

The Community Character chapter is primarily focused on land use issues relating to future land development, or redevelopment, zoning, and existing land uses. The goal of this chapter is to promote and protect the suburban residential character in the core of Central College Station, balanced with the need to provide denser redevelopment options along the neighborhood fringe. The evaluation of the land use components in this area found the vast majority to be compatible with future land use categories and zoning. However, a few areas were identified for changes to the land use or the zoning. Draft strategies for this chapter include developing new zoning districts to reflect new land use designations, working with property owners to rezone their property, working to develop a site and façade improvement program for older commercial properties in the area, and limited land acquisition for flood-prone areas.

Neighborhood Integrity focuses on issues and opportunities that face single-family subdivisions in the neighborhood. The goal of this chapter is to improve property maintenance and City code compliance to elevate the attractiveness of Central College Station's subdivisions as an affordable, family-friendly neighborhood. The focus of this chapter is on neighborhoods organizing to more effectively work with neighborhood issues and aligning City services to better serve our single-family neighborhoods. Draft strategies include working with homeowner and neighborhood associations to develop programming, provide technical assistance, and increase civic participation, with the goal of improving the capacity of these organizations and to be more effective in finding solutions to localized issues. Other strategies include enhanced service delivery for code enforcement, neighborhood services, and other City services for primarily owner-occupied areas to ensure these areas remain owner occupied.

CENTRAL COLLEGE STATION NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN (continued)

The Mobility chapter of the plan focuses on a variety of transportation issues in the neighborhood. The goal of the chapter is to promote a safe, well-connected, multi-modal transportation system to better connect Central College Station to the rest of the community and its local neighborhood centers. This chapter evaluates existing thoroughfares for future capacity needs and character compliance, identifies bicycle and pedestrian routes for improvement and connection, and ways to promote alternative transit opportunities through existing bus service. Draft strategies include incorporating character-based street improvements on Deacon Drive and Rio Grande Boulevard, a variety of warrant studies to evaluate the need for intersection improvements in the area, and sidewalk and bicycle lane additions to complete the bicycle and pedestrian network in this area.

Sustainability focuses on a variety of programs and opportunities to increase efficient and responsible use of natural resources. This chapter focuses on recycling, water and energy conservation, and stormwater management. The goal of this chapter is to increase awareness and participation in resource conservation efforts. Specific strategies drafted for this chapter include improved awareness campaigns for recycling and related services, development of new educational opportunities about resource conservation, as well as improving awareness of existing programs and opportunities.

The plan is expected to be adopted in early June by the City Council. The City Council and the Planning and Zoning Commission will receive the draft of the plan on May 27th, with public hearings scheduled for June 3rd with the Planning and Zoning Commission for recommendation, and on June 10th for formal adoption by the City Council.



MASTER PLANS

An integral step in the successful implementation of the recently updated Comprehensive Plan is the development and implementation of more detailed master plans. These master plans tend to focus on a specific function (such as water or parks) and are generally shorter term in their focus (5-10 years versus the 20 years of the Comprehensive Plan). The intent of the various master plans is to take the very general direction provided in the Comprehensive Plan and identify more specific actions, programs, and projects that, when accomplished, will yield the results called for in the Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan included a strategy that called for a direct link between the goals and strategies contained in the Comprehensive Plan and the actions identified in the master plan.

The first master plan completed and adopted by the Council was the Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Greenways Master Plan, which, when implemented, will help realize the Comprehensive Plan's strategies of increased non-vehicular options for moving around our community, as well as protection of various natural features. Work is well underway on an update of the City's Recreation, Parks, and Open Space Plan, which will provide specific actions related to the location and types of parks and recreation programs. It is expected that this plan will be complete and ready for adoption later in 2010.

Work is also well underway in the development of the Water and Wastewater Master Plan, which, when implemented, will guide the City's investments in water and wastewater infrastructure for the next 10 years. This plan is critical to ensuring that the City's utility system is designed and located to support the proposed land use and character identified in the Comprehensive Plan. It is expected that this plan will be complete and ready for adoption later in 2010.

Other master plans will be prepared that focus on economic development and fire protection. The various small area plans being prepared by the City (such as the current Central College Station Area Neighborhood Plan and the Medical District Plan) will complement these master plans.



MULTI-USE PATH UPDATE

Two multi-use paths currently under design include a path along Harvey Mitchell Parkway (FM 2818) and a path in Bee Creek Park. Each is described below.

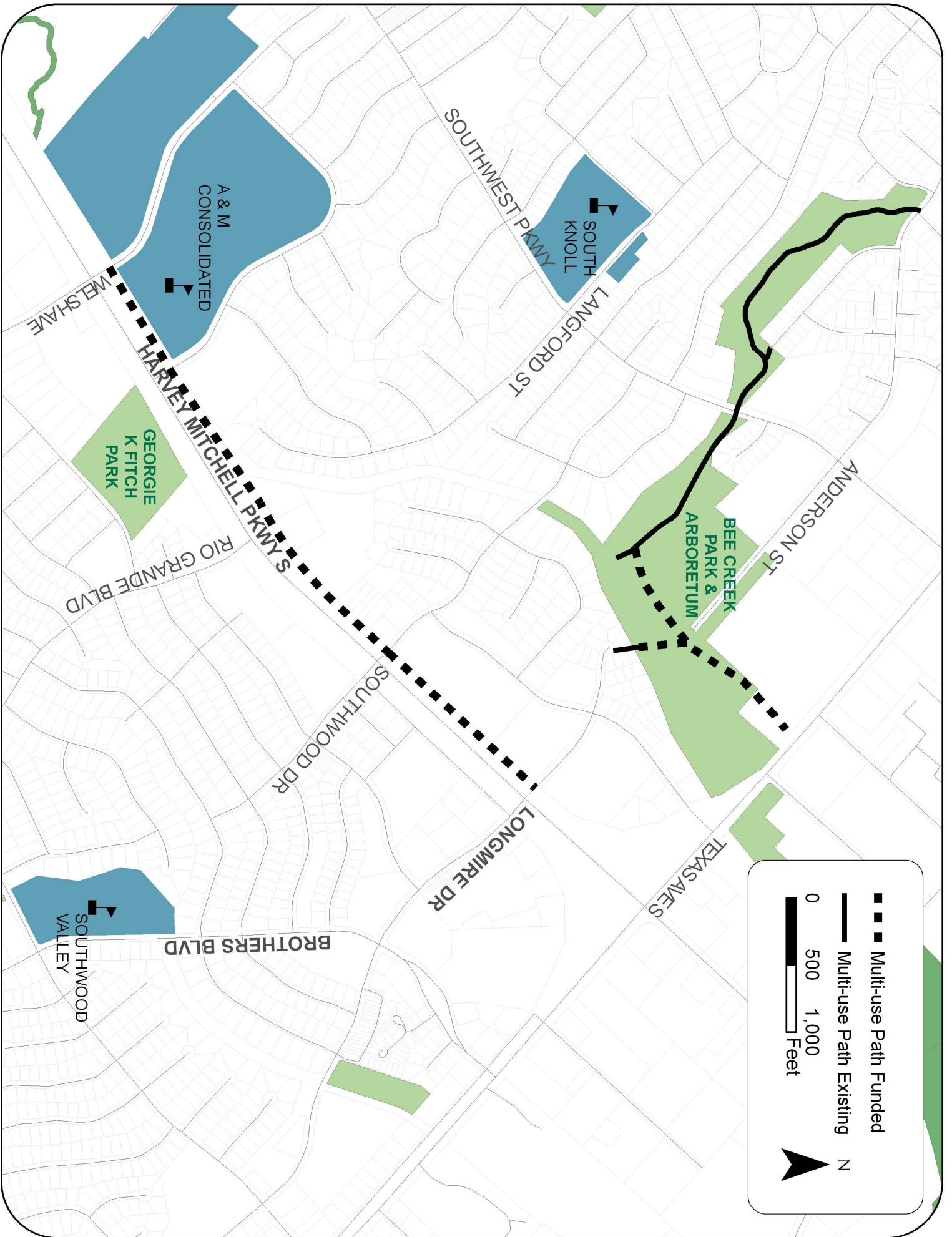
MULTI-USE PATH ALONG HARVEY MITCHELL PARKWAY (FM 2818)

The multi-use path will follow along the northwest side of Harvey Mitchell Parkway (FM 2818) from Welsh Avenue to Longmire Drive (possibly to Texas Avenue). This project is funded through the November 2008 Bond Referendum. It will connect destinations including A&M Consolidated High School, Bee Creek Park, and commercial property to residences. The design of the project is 90% complete. Environmental clearance review has been completed by the Texas Department of Transportation. It should be ready to bid in Summer 2010, and construction should begin this Fall with completion early Winter 2011.

MULTI-USE PATH IN BEE CREEK PARK

This multi-use path will create a North/South connection between Longmire Drive and Anderson Street, a connection to the existing path in Bee Creek Park to the west, and a future connection across Texas Avenue at Krennek Tap Road to the east. This project is funded through the 1993 Transportation Enhancement Program and 1995 Bond Referendum. It will create a key connection across Bee Creek with the recently constructed bridge. Once design is complete this Summer, the project will require environmental clearance review and technical review by the Texas Department of Transportation. Construction should begin Spring 2011 with completion Summer 2011.





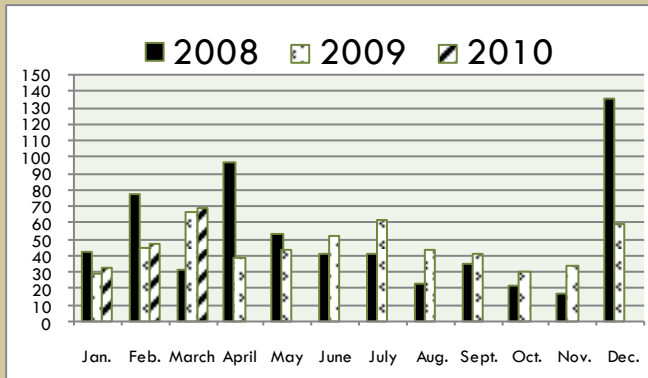


BUILDING PERMIT TOTALS:

Month of March 2010						Month of March 2009		
Type of Permit	Permit	Unit	Total Sq. Ft.	Heat Sq. Ft.	Amount	Permit	Unit	Amount
Single Family Home	68	68	130,228	121,146	\$8,365,901	66	66	\$8,748,463
Duplex	0	0	0	0	\$0	0	0	\$0
Tri-plex/Four-plex	0	0	0	0	\$0	0	0	\$0
Apartment	0	0	0	0	\$0	0	0	\$0
Residential Addition	3	N/A	1,309	1,309	\$60,000	6	N/A	\$196,860
Residential Remodel	1	N/A	1,200	1,200	\$9,500	4	N/A	\$70,000
Residential Garage/Carport Addition	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$0	1	N/A	\$8,500
Residential Demolition	4	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$13,000	0	N/A	\$0
Residential Slab Only-SF	1	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$11,780	0	N/A	\$0
Residential Slab Only-DP	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$0	0	N/A	\$0
Residential Slab Only-3&4	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$0	0	N/A	\$0
Residential Slab Only-Apt.	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$0	0	N/A	\$0
Hotel / Motel / Inn	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$0	0	0	\$0
New Commercial	4	N/A	15,942	15,132	\$1,916,348	1	N/A	\$125,000
Commercial Remodel	1	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$350,000	3	N/A	\$105,000
Commercial Addition/Retaining Wall	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$0	0	N/A	\$0
Commercial Demolition	1	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$1,000	0	N/A	\$0
Commercial Slab Only	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$0	0	N/A	\$0
Swimming Pool	12	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$391,440	6	N/A	\$271,700
Sign	9	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$2,600	8	N/A	\$25,008
Moving & Location	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$0		N/A	\$0
Storage / Accessory	1	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$3,300	1	N/A	\$13,000
Roofing	8	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$43,575	2	N/A	\$6,000
TOTALS	113	68	148,679	138,787	\$11,168,444	98	66	\$9,569,531

January 1, 2010 - March 31, 2010						January 1, 2009 - March 31, 2009		
Type of Permit	Permit	Unit	Total Sq. Ft.	Heat Sq. Ft.	Amount	Permit	Unit	Amount
Single Family Home	146	146	325,895	289,137	\$20,437,127	138	138	\$17,733,884
Duplex	0	0	0	0	\$0	0	0	\$0
Tri-plex/Four-plex	0	0	0	0	\$0	0	0	\$0
Apartment	0	0	0	0	\$0	1	21	\$1,800,000
Residential Addition	9	N/A	7,713	5,537	\$497,195	14	N/A	\$488,190
Residential Remodel	6	N/A	5,200	5,762	\$220,500	19	N/A	\$238,483
Residential Garage/Carport Addition	1	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$9,000	1	N/A	\$8,500
Residential Demolition	5	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$18,000	0	N/A	\$0
Residential Slab Only-SF	2	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$22,802	1	N/A	\$9,450
Residential Slab Only-DP	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$0	0	N/A	\$0
Residential Slab Only-3&4	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$0	0	N/A	\$0
Residential Slab Only-Apt.	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$0	0	N/A	\$0
Hotel / Motel / Inn	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$0	0	0	\$0
New Commercial	8	N/A	26,856	24,005	\$3,402,348	10	N/A	\$7,676,687
Commercial Remodel	5	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$942,000	10	N/A	\$300,000
Commercial Addition/Retaining Wall	2	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$74,504	2	N/A	\$3,212,000
Commercial Demolition	1	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$1,000	2	N/A	\$19,489
Commercial Slab Only	1	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$21,000	0	N/A	\$0
Swimming Pool	15	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$528,715	15	N/A	\$785,050
Sign	32	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$2,600	37	N/A	\$164,458
Moving & Location	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$0	1	N/A	\$40,000
Storage / Accessory	6	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$21,650	3	N/A	\$30,700
Roofing	55	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$151,075	4	N/A	\$9,000
TOTALS	294	146	365,664	324,441	\$26,349,516	258	159	\$32,515,891

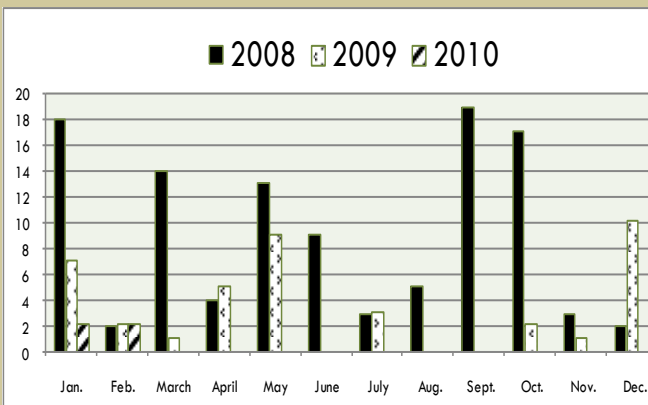
NEW SINGLE FAMILY PERMITS 3 YEAR—COMPARISON BY MONTH



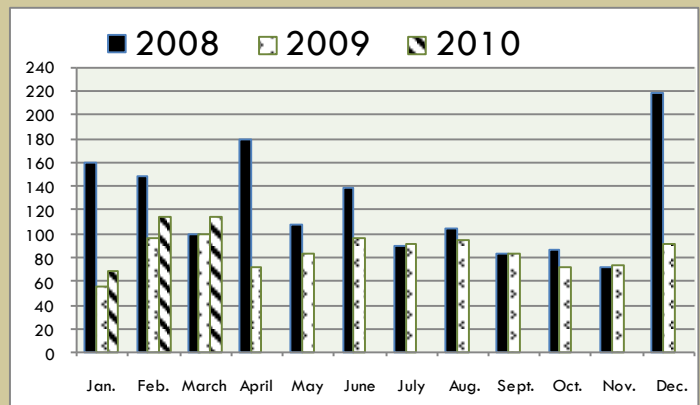
PERMITS BY TYPE YEAR TO DATE

Type of Permit	Permit	Unit	Amount
Single-Family Home	146	146	\$20,437,127
Duplex	0	0	\$0
Tri-Plex/Four-plex	0	0	\$0
Apartment	0	0	\$0
New Commercial	8	N/A	\$3,402,348
Commercial Remodel	5	N/A	\$942,000

NEW COMMERCIAL PERMITS 3 YEAR—COMPARISON BY MONTH



TOTAL PERMITS 3 YEAR—COMPARISON BY MONTH



REZONING SCOOP:

Project Number	Location of Land	Acres	Request	P&Z Date	Status	Council Date	Status
10-500007	13601 & 13679 FM 2154	1.50	AO to PDD	1-Apr	Denied	22-Apr	Approved
09-500262	3228 Rock Prairie Rd	11.69	R1 to R3	15-Apr	Denied	22-Apr	Denied

BUILDING INSPECTIONS:

MONTH	BUILDING	PLUMBING	ELECTRIC	MECHANICAL	LAWN	SIGN	POOL	DEMO	TOTAL
JANUARY	277	233	192	112	18	13	6	0	851
FEBRUARY	291	214	194	131	3	10	12	0	855
MARCH	365	290	289	150	5	12	13	0	1124

CODE ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES SUMMARY:

MONTH	HEALTH & SANITATION	PROPERTY MAINTENANCE	PUBLIC NUISANCE	FIRE PROTECTION	TRAFFIC CODE	SANITATION	UDO/ ZONING	RENTAL REGISTRATION	MISCELLANEOUS	TOTAL
JANUARY	129	40	38	19	20	172	90	575	362	1445
FEBRUARY	130	73	77	17	48	156	87	66	430	1084
MARCH	463	43	111	55	31	88	108	16	725	1640

POPULATION: The March population estimate is 93,650.



LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

It's rapidly approaching one year since the adoption of the revised Comprehensive Plan. In June, staff will deliver to the Planning & Zoning Commission and City Council a formal update on the progress of the plan and will make recommendations regarding the next year's implementation steps. Much of this first year was spent getting the word out regarding the updated plan. This was accomplished through speaking opportunities, development of a poster plan that neatly encompasses the major points of the plan on a single page, and referencing the plan regularly in the review of development proposals, rezoning, annexations, etc.

In addition to updating the Unified Development Ordinance, perhaps the most important implementation methods include the development and implementation of the various master plans, small area plans, and project programming identified in the Comprehensive Plan. To date, the City's Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Greenways Master Plan has been revised and adopted, work is well underway on the update to the Recreation, Parks, and Open Space Master Plan, and the Water & Wastewater Master Plan. Additionally, work is nearly complete on the Central College Station Area Neighborhood Plan. The Medical District (part of the Spring Creek District identified in the Comprehensive Plan) is set to begin this year as well as an update to the City's Economic Development Master Plan. Finally, the City recently went through an extensive Capital Improvements Programming exercise to identify and prioritize the city's major expenditures on infrastructure and facilities to ensure alignment with Council strategic direction and the Comprehensive Plan.

Much has been accomplished in this first year and the next couple of years look to be even busier as the Department works hard to help the residents of College Station achieve the vision embraced in the plan and create, protect, and enhance places of distinction!

Robert S. Cowell, Jr., AICP, CNU-A
Director

